

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated December 14, 2005, claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gatzke in view of Applicant's prior art admissions, further in view of Schuman et al. Claims 1-4 alternatively were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on this combination, further in view of Duich and Lin et al.

By the present response, the subject matter of claim 4 has been embodied in independent claim 1, and claim 4 accordingly has been cancelled. Since the subject matter of dependent claim 3 would be inconsistent with amended independent claim 1, claim 3 has been cancelled.

Amended independent claim 1, and claim 2 depending therefrom, are submitted to be patentable over the teachings of the references relied upon by the Examiner for the following reasons.

In the Gatzke reference, the connection between the ultrasound module 10 and the probe 30 ensues via a cable 25, as can be seen from Fig. 1 thereof. A communication channel that can be fashioned as an infrared path, or in some other wireless manner, is also mentioned in the Gatzke reference, but this wireless communication channel or path serves merely for the transfer of data from and to the patient monitor itself. The Gatzke reference does not disclose or suggest wireless transfer of the measurement signals from the ultrasound probe to the ultrasound module 10. An advantage of a wireless communication according to the invention between the ultrasound sensor and the module that is installed in the patient monitor is that only a single ultrasound probe, or very few ultrasound probes, are necessary, and can be easily carried by a physician. This is an advantage because the

ultrasound probes incur the highest cost in an ultrasound apparatus. The ultrasound probes serve for the acquisition of the measurement values, and the subsequent processing of the measurement values ensues with associated hardware and software modules that are installed in the patient monitor. These modules, however, are standardized and therefore do not represent significant additional costs. A physician can therefore successively examine a number of patients with a single ultrasound sensor, with the single ultrasound sensor communicating wirelessly with the appropriate module. The wireless data transfer is particularly advantageous in this situation because the ultrasound sensor is able to successively communicate with different modules.

The Schuman reference discloses a cable connection between the ultrasound sensor (transducer) and the ultrasound apparatus 100. Only the transfer of data from the ultrasound apparatus 100 to a PDA or a portable computer device ensues wirelessly. A wireless transfer of the measurement signals from the ultrasound sensor to an interface or a module is not disclosed or suggested in the Schuman reference.

Therefore, even if the Gatzke reference were modified in accordance with Applicant's prior art admissions and the teachings of Schuman et al, the subject matter of amended independent claim 1 still would not result.

As to the alternative rejection relying additionally on the teachings of Duich and Lin et al., Applicant submits that those references disclose wireless transfer of the measurement signals to an ultrasound apparatus, or to a patient monitor. These references do not disclose or suggest wireless transfer of measurement signals from the ultrasound sensor to an interface or module.

Therefore, even if the Gatzke, admitted prior art, Schuman et al combination were further modified in accordance with the teachings of Duich and/or Lin et al, the subject matter of claim 1 still would not result. The Duich and Lin et al reference do not provide any teachings beyond those already within the basic Gatzke, admitted prior art, Schuman et al combination.

Claim 2 adds further structure to the non-obvious combination of independent claim 1 and is therefore patentable over the teachings of the above references for the same reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1.

Claims 1 and 2 are therefore submitted to be in condition for allowance, and early reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Submitted by,

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SCHIFF, HARDIN LLP
CUSTOMER NO. 26574
Patent Department
6600 Sears Tower
233 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Telephone: 312/258-5790
Attorneys for Applicant.